

Refuting pro-FDG book 2

Refuting Madana Mohana dāsa's book

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Section Summary

“Guru: The principle not the body” by Madana Mohana Dāsa, is an online publication of 200 odd pages,¹ dedicated to refuting another book: “Vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā according to Nārada-pāñcarātra” by Damodara Dasa (BVKS) and Krishna-kīrti Dasa (BVKS), which contains *śāstric* evidence from the *Nārada-pāñcarātra Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* pertaining to the FDG debate. In this section, we analyze the refutations of Madana Mohana Dāsa (herein after referred to as author) based on *śāstra-sādhu-guru-vākya*s.

- The author of this book, has chosen the internet as the final location for his book, has not finalized the contents of his book and has kept it open for “editing,” hence making it a moving target by design.
- The author of this book, misrepresents Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Prabhupāda by attributing to them his personal derision of the character of Sunīti, a devotee of the Lord.
- The author of this book, also misrepresents Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava and its author, Bhakti Vikāsa Swami Mahārāja, by attributing his concocted views on Bipina Bihārī Goswami’s caste goswami status to Mahārāja.
- In the name of providing scriptural evidence for FDG, the author’s suggestions are *apasiddhānta*: that one can have “many” female *dīkṣā-gurus*, that one should imitate pure devotees of the Lord like the gopīs of Vraja, and that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī says fallen disciples of ISKCON can be delivered by female *dīkṣā-gurus*.
- The author of this book, offers mere lip-service and a fake sense of loyalty to Śrīla Prabhupāda by falsely projecting Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings as being divorced from *śāstras*. Numerous evidence is found in the author’s writing that proves his opposition to the views of Śrīla

1 Guru: The Principle, Not the Body — by Madana-mohana Dāsa, 2020: <https://tinyurl.com/yeymwbbe>
[or] <https://tinyurl.com/4ts5px6h> **Caution!!!** See the section titled, “Caution: volatile content”

Prabhupāda in the guise of a false sense of loyalty to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings.

- A stubborn, capricious, and determined mindset of the author to insult and portray Sunīti, a devotee of the Lord, as vengeful, and an unqualified śikṣā-guru; thereby deliberately contradicting Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statements about her.
- The author discusses Sunīti’s position in a repeatedly contradictory fashion, describing her as qualified or as unqualified as it is convenient for his current argument.
- The author vouches for the validity of Bipina Bihārī Goswami’s caste goswami status, which is completely opposed and not rooted in the statements of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhāta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, and Śrīla Prabhupāda regarding Bipina Bihārī Goswami.
- The author opposes the implementation of the *Nārada-pāñcarātra Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* through whimsical arguments severely criticizing the *pāñcarātra* scripture. This is in direct opposition to the instructions of all our previous ācāryas, including Śrīla Prabhupāda, who have commented about and glorified this scripture as authentic.

Caution: volatile content

Madana Mohana Dāsa, a pro-FDG author, admits that the contents of his book are eternally subject to editing, with a poor track record of revision history. At the time of writing these refutations, the latest version that we retrieved from the internet is 214 pages long. Careful examination of the contents this book reveals that ever since the release of the first edition (Feb 2020), the author has made some documented (albeit poorly documented) edits and some undocumented edits obviously intended to make stealthy alterations to his book without being detected. The author seems to have anticipated refutations to his content and hence seems to have designed his book to be a moving target, so to speak, managed over the internet, making

it nearly impossible for other scholars to ensure the veracity of their citations and general contents of his book. Unlike other social media content, the author's chosen method of archival does not permit readers to get notifications of changes made by him over time. During the period from October 2020 to March 2021, we downloaded a copy of the book from its specified internet location on three different dates. These three versions of the downloaded book, differed significantly in the number of pages and as well as in content, with no revision history, indicating that the author has been updating the content periodically. Hence, the readers are cautioned to be aware of the track record of the author to "inject/delete/modify" the contents without notice and also to be aware of the non-existing version-transparency system.²

Grain of rice test: misrepresentations

We will use the "grain of rice test" methodology to determine the quality of scholarship of this author. After going through the contents of this book, it has been detected that the author has misrepresented other authors and their works, while citing references from their works as his supporting evidence. In the following sub-sections, we shall elaborate on a few instances of gross misrepresentation on the part of the author.

Misrepresenting Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

Citing Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on SB 4.8.20, the author misrepresents the Ṭhākura's remarks about Sunīti, implying that Ṭhākura was suggesting that her calling Sruci vile indicated that her character was vengeful, and thus degraded. The following is an excerpt from page 173 of his book in which the author misrepresents Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's statements regarding SB 4.8.20:

Sunīti as Dhruva's mother and a neglected co-wife of the King was afflicted by grief out of affection for her son, as well as by

2 Three versions retrieved are archived at: <https://tinyurl.com/3bva5549>

jealousy and vengefulness towards Suruci and Uttānapāda, [161] and therefore she could not muster enough composure and clarity (required of a guru) to pacify and enlighten even herself, much less her son; [see also Appendix 2: Did Sunīti wish them well?] – page 173

[161]: VCT on SB 4.8.20 (translation by Bhanu Swami): “[Dhruva:] ‘Will I enter the womb of that sinful woman by worshipping the Lord?’ [Sunīti:] ‘She is such a vile creature. Your father, her servant, is also vile and foolish. You can attain a position greater than that of Brahmā. Therefore quickly go from here and worship the Lord.’” *nanu kiṁ harim ārādhya tasyāḥ pāpīyasyāḥ garbhaṁ pravekṣyāmīti tatra sā varākī khalu kā, tasyāḥ kiṅkaras tvat-pitaiva varāko dīna-buddhis tvaṁ brahma-padād apy utkr̥ṣṭaṁ padaṁ prāptuṁ pārayiṣyasi, tad itaḥ śighraṁ vraja*

Several months after publishing the first version of his book, Madana Mohana Dāsa seems to have acknowledged some of the devotee readers’ concerns, in response to which he reiterated his offensive stance against Sunīti, not concerned about apologizing to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the *sampradāya ācārya*, nor to the devotee community. Excerpts from pages 211 to 214 are presented below as proof of such gross violations on the part of the author:

Section IV titled The Sunīti Pramāṇa lists the following as one possible explanation as to why Sunīti could not become Dhruva’s dikṣā-guru:

Sunīti as Dhruva’s mother ... was afflicted by grief...as well as by jealousy and vengefulness towards Suruci and Uttānapāda, ... she could not...(required of a guru) to pacify and enlighten even herself, much less her son;

This statement caused pushback from some readers who even asked for a public apology....

So, while saying that she was vengeful might be a bit of an overstatement or not, this doesn’t change the fact that her calling her husband and co-wife in front of Dhruva ill names is off-limits for a Vedic wife, per above quotes.

In a lecture, cited below, Śrīla Prabhupāda states that Sunitī was a Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee and hence her son Dhruva Mahārāja naturally became a devotee by following her advice. But we find that the author’s view that Sunitī was afflicted by grief, vengefulness, and jealousy and could not enlighten even herself, much less her son, directly contradicts Śrīla Prabhupāda’s view:

Dhruva Mahārāja, out of his sentiment, he went to the forest and to see God. His mother said that “Your this mental condition cannot be relieved because you want to challenge your father to have the kingdom. So I am poor. I am, although your mother, I cannot request your father. So if it is possible, Kṛṣṇa can do it.” She was Kṛṣṇa conscious; therefore the child became so nice, Dhruva Mahārāja. A child inherits the quality of mother, boy, and girl inherits the quality of father. That is the general rule. So his mother was devotee, so he’ll naturally become a devotee by the advice of the mother. [Ref. VedaBase => Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.9.54, April 9, 1976, Vṛndāvana]

In latter sections of this refutation, we will establish beyond doubt that the author’s blasphemy of Sunīti is intentional and hence a total misrepresentation of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

Misrepresenting Śrīla Prabhupāda regarding Sunīti

In his purport to SB 4.8.65, Śrīla Prabhupāda states that according to *Manu-smṛiti* one should not abandon his wife and children, and hence, by banishing Sunīti and Dhruva Mahārāja king Uttānapāda repented for his act and was feeling sorry.³ Yet the author, using his cleverness and misguided intelligence misrepresents Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words in order to declare Uttānapāda faultless and Sunīti at fault for insulting and holding a vengeful attitude towards her husband.⁴

After going through Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purports to chapter eight and chapter nine of the fourth canto we find that in his

3 “Moreover, he was a great devotee. Such a person is never to be neglected, yet the King was obliged to banish him. Now he was very sorry.” – [purport to SB 4.8.65]

4 Pages 211 and 212, section, “Appendix-II,” “Guru: the principle not the body”

purport to SB 4.8.23, Śrīla Prabhupāda glorifies Sunīti as being a far-seeing woman who could see the real benefit of others and in his purport to SB 4.9.52, Śrīla Prabhupāda glorifies Sunīti a pure devotee, always meditating upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead.⁵ Yet the author cleverly juggles and twists the words from Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purports in order to stitch his own narrative and then misrepresents his personal narrative as being Śrīla Prabhupāda’s narrative, as will be shown in the following paragraphs. The author’s narrative on page 212 of his book is as cited below:

[SB] 4.8.21-23: As a result, even though Suniti supported Suruci’s instructions, glorified the Lord and encouraged Dhruva to worship Him, Dhruva still could not get rid of his vengeance on the way to the forest, as pointed out by Śrīla Prabhupāda in SB 4.9.23. – [Pages 211 and 212]

A careful examination of the above citation from his book, reveals that the author has “stitched” together statements from four different purports (4.8.21-23 and 4.9.23) gathered from two different chapters with different contexts. The first part of his summary, “As a result, even though Suniti supported Suruci’s instructions, glorified the Lord and encouraged Dhruva to worship Him” is gathered from the purports to SB 4.8.21-23. The second part of his summary, “Dhruva still could not get rid of his vengeance on the way to the forest,” is extracted from a different purport to SB 4.9.23 with totally different context.

Yet the question remains: why the author, after summarizing the purports to 4.8.21-23 in the first part, try to connect it with a summary, with different context, from the purport to SB 4.9.23 in the second part? Furthermore, since the author has expertly connected these two summaries with different contexts, the

5 “Dhruva Mahārāja was the lost child of Queen Sunīti, but during his absence she always meditated upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is able to rescue His devotee from all dangers... In other words, the Lord was worshiped by both the mother and the son, and both were able to achieve the supreme benediction from the Supreme Lord.” – SB 4.9.52 purport

readers are misled to believe that the entire statement is the view of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Is this not an act of stuffing words into Śrīla Prabhupāda's mouth? If we read through the verses and purports of chapter eight, canto 4 starting from verse 21-24 in its normal sequence, without injecting statements from the purport to SB 4.9.23, one would never get an iota of such convoluted ideas as the author expresses on page 212 of his book.

As a spiritual instructor, Sunīti instructed her son to give up vengeance and nowhere in his purports to these chapters does Śrīla Prabhupāda disqualify Sunīti or hold her responsible for Dhruva Mahārāja's vengeance against Suruci or king Uttānapāda. Hence the fact that Dhruva Mahārāja still carried vengeance against Suruci, his stepmother, on the way to the forest is not a disqualification on the part of his *sikṣā-guru*, Sunīti.

The author has cleverly linked Śrīla Prabhupāda's three purports (4.8.21-23) from chapter 8 with a purport from the next chapter (4.9.23), to inject his concocted context flow into the minds of the readers. Then, on page 213 of his book, the author resumes to summarize verse 4.8.24 but this time only to twist Śrīla Prabhupāda's words and the original context of the flow, as indicated by the words in emphasis:

Finally in 4.8.24: Maitreya significantly says that Sunīti's words were arthāgamam vacaḥ, which Śrīla Prabhupāda translates as "the instruction of Dhruva Mahārāja's mother, Sunīti, was actually meant for fulfilling his desired objective" — **which happens to be, quite determinedly, to take revenge on Suruci.** – [Page 213]

In essence, Śrīla Prabhupāda's words in purports 4.8.21 to 4.8.24, when read in sequence, indicate that the desired objective of queen Sunīti and Dhruva Mahārāja was to worship the Supreme Lord in order to attain a kingdom even bigger than that of king Uttānapāda. However, the author wants his readers to read the purports out of sequence: starting from 4.8.21-23, then jump over to the purport to 4.9.23 and then return to the 4.8.24

purport. By doing so, the author, through his mystic powers of deceptive scholarship, transforms the desired objective of queen Sunīti and Dhruva Mahārāja from the worship of the Supreme Lord to “**quite determinedly, to take revenge on Suruci.**”

One may wonder which school of mystical fact-juggling scholarship did the author graduate from in order to exhibit such a fantastic job of lexical sleight of hand. Subsequent sections reveal more evidence to prove that the real intention of the author is to deride Vedic culture and personalities is his desperation to propagate his false narrative that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted his female disciples to become *dikṣā-gurus*.

Misrepresentation: Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava and its author

On page 34 of his book the author indicates in footnote references to chapters 2 and 16 of volume I of the three-volume set of HH Bhakti Vikāśa Swami’s Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava. To establish that Bipina Bihārī Goswami did not subscribe to caste-goswami consciousness nor that he was an “*apasampradāya*” guru, on pages 33 and 34 of his book the author quotes a passage from chapter 16 of Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava (vol I).⁶ Through this citation the author speculates that had Bipina Bihārī Goswami been an *apasampradāya* guru, his writings would also been tinged with *apasampradāya* concepts, in which case Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura would not have agreed to edit and use Bipina Bihārī Goswami’s *Hari-bhakti-taraṅgiṇī*.⁷ Nonetheless, the author skipped over relevant passages from chapter 2 of the same volume titled, “The Bālighāi Showdown,” cited below (emphasis ours):

6 “Not only that but one would expect the writings of an *apasampradāya* guru such as Bipina Bihārī Goswami to be also tinged with deviations and as such, unacceptable for pure devotees. However, as Bhakti Vikāśa Swami writes in Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava:” – Page 33, “Guru: the principle not the body”

7 More details with citation presented in latter sections.

In August 1911, suspending their mutual mistrust, the *smārta-brāhmaṇas* and caste Goswamis arranged a meeting at Sujangar village, in Midnapore District of Bengal. **Under the chairmanship of Śrī Bipina Bihārī Goswami they declared their anti-devotional manifesto, soon thereafter published as Pūrva-pakṣa Nirāsane (Refutal of the opposing argument):**

Unless born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, a Vaiṣṇava is disqualified from worshiping śālagrāma-śilā and conferring initiation. By accepting disciples, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śyāmānanda Prabhu had thus contravened śāstra;

Caitanya Mahāprabhu presented Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī with a Govardhana-śilā because as a śūdra he was disqualified from śālagrāma-śilā worship;

Worship of Govardhana-śilā has no śāstrīya basis and hence is merely conventional or sentimental;

Only those injunctions of *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* that do not contradict traditional *smṛtis* are to be followed.⁸

Thus, the author misused Bhakti Vikāśa Swami's partial quotes from chapter 16 of Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava to impose upon the readers his speculative views that there was no tinge of "*apasampradāya* or caste Goswami" inclination in Bipina Bihārī Goswami. However, the above citation (texts in emphasis) from chapter 2 of Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava reveals the reality. This citation contradict the author's narrative about Bipina Bihārī Goswami on pages 33 through 35 of his book, which clearly proves that he is guilty of misrepresenting the views of Bhakti Vikāśa Swami.

Claims of śāstric evidence for FDG:

In the name of providing śāstric injunctions for FDG, the author merely cites exceptional incidents from previous yugas as precedence for implementing FDGs within ISKCON. He also

⁸ "Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vaibhava (vol I)," Bhakti Vikāśa Swami, chapter 2 pages 43, 44,

suggests clear *apasiddhāntic* ideas by extracting statements from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's commentary (*Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*) on atonements as the standard for implementing FDG. We will refute all such misconceptions in this section based on scriptural evidence.

Did Mother Rukmiṇī had a female *dīkṣā-guru*?

On pages 117-118 of his book the author claims that Mother Rukmiṇī was initiated by female gurus and hence this is evidence that there were FDGs even in *dvāpara-yuga*, as cited below (emphasis ours):

In Chapter 53 of the Tenth Canto Rukmiṇī Devī received a mantra for worshiping Goddess Bhavānī, or Durgā, from elderly wives of brāhmaṇas, who also taught and guided Rukmiṇī in the ritual of worship itself: ...

Although **the elderly brāhmaṇīs** apparently **did not perform a Vaiṣṇava dīkṣā**, they nevertheless did initiate Rukmiṇī into the ritual of worshipping Goddess Bhavānī and into the chanting of the mantra required for the worship. Jīva Gosvāmī explains that the mantra was revealed to them, or realized by them (*tāsām eva draṣṭṛtvaṁ labhyate*). The ladies then took part in the worship alongside Rukmiṇī and at its conclusion offered her prasāda and blessings.

In other words, the brāhmaṇas' wives by themselves and independently of their husbands performed all the brahminical functions, including instructions, worship, blessings **and, yes, initiation into worship for Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort, Rukmiṇī – contrary to your notion that “in Kṛṣṇa's Vedic culture there were brahmanis (wives of brāhmaṇas) but they never took the position of dīkṣā-guru.”** (VNP 35) – [p 117-118]

Our refutations:

Let us consider the words in emphasis in the above citation from page 118 of the book under discussion. First, the author himself states that the elderly *brāhmaṇīs* did not perform a *Vaiṣṇava-*

dīkṣā but then in the last part of his statement he contradicts himself and says that the elderly wives of *brāhmaṇas* did assume the position of *dīkṣā-guru*.

Second: According to *śāstric* injunctions, a disciple can accept only one *dīkṣā-guru*.⁹ Hence, how can the author claim that the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* took the position of Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī's *dīkṣā-gurus*? Certainly, this situation described in chapter 53 of the tenth canto of the *Bhāgavatam*, is not describing the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* as *dīkṣā-gurus* since there were many *brahmaṇīs* instructing (giving *śikṣā*) Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī. There can be many *śikṣā-gurus* but only one *dīkṣā-guru*.

Third: it is not that anyone giving a mantra automatically becomes the receiver's default *dīkṣā-guru* but can be considered the receiver's *śikṣā-guru*, as stated in the following conversation:

Prabhupāda: Sannyāsa, there is a ceremony. Just like we have got the initiation ceremony.

Hayagrīva: Did He have a spiritual master?

Prabhupāda: So He accepted spiritual... Not spiritual master but a sannyāsa-guru. That is also master but he's not spiritual master. But he's also considered as sannyāsa-guru, spiritual master who offers him sannyāsa. Just like myself, I took initiation from my Guru Maharaja but I took sannyāsa from a Godbrother who is a sannyāsī. So my original guru is that spiritual master who initiated me but he's also a *śikṣā guru*. Like that. Teacher.¹⁰ – [670405lc-san-francisco]

Fourth: In chapter 53 of Kṛṣṇa book, Śrīla Prabhupāda states that since the older wives of the *brāhmaṇas* were perfect at chanting the prayers they led the prayers, and nowhere does he indicate that they initiated Mother Rukmiṇī. BBT Translations of the verses of chapter 53 of the 10th canto also don't contain any such information.

9 See Cc *Ādi* 1.35 purport

10 <https://tinyurl.com/5xa33kky>

Fifth: In ceremonies that are predominated by ladies, as part of *strī-karma*, women alone have the right to give mantras to other women as indicated by Jīva Gosvāmi in his commentary to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Vamsidhara, one of the commentators of the *Bhāgavatam*, mentions that in the rituals which are meant only for women, the prominence is given for women (*strī-karmasu strīṇāmeva prādhānyam*). In his commentary to these verses of the *Bhāgavatam*, Śrīdhara Svāmi also says that due to the prominence given for women in such rituals, it is befitting here that Lord Śiva is said here to be accompanying his wife (otherwise the proper etiquette is to say that wife is accompanying her husband).

Finally, this is an example of rituals meant for women alone wherein they receive mantras such as *Ambikā-mantra*, a mantra meant for worshipping Mother Durga and not an initiation to chant *Hari-nāma* or *Vaiṣṇava-mantra* or *Vaiṣṇava-dikṣā*.

Mukta-carita as evidence for female dikṣā-guru

The author also cites a passage from the scripture *Mukta-carita* in order to claim that the Gopis of Vṛndāvaṇa had females as their *dikṣā-gurus* which proves that FDGs were common in Vedic times:

Gopis seeking initiation from Paurṇamāsī's disciple Nāndāmukhī is an evidence for FDG. – page 118

Our refutations:

First: *Mukta-carita* is a scripture meant for those who are already liberated persons and so how does this apply to us conditioned souls of Kali-yuga? These rules apply only to those who are on an elevated platform near that of the Gopis, who are unmatched as the Lord's eternal lovers.

Second: in Cc *Ādi*, 10.113 Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions that the context of Paurṇamāsī's instructions to Nāndāmukhī, described in the *Vidagdha-mādhava* (2.18) by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, was concerned with love of Godhead. Hence, we conditioned

souls should not try to imitate pure devotees and implement female *dīkṣā-gurus* within ISKCON based on this evidence as a precedence.

Third: Śrīla Prabhupāda neither mentioned nor instructed us regarding the elevated topics mentioned in *Mukta-carita* as being guidelines for ISKCON devotees to follow. Indeed, Śrīla Prabhupāda made only a passing reference to *Mukta-carita* and *sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* (purport to Cc *Ādi*, 10.91) by merely listing their names, yet surprisingly the pro-FDGs adopted, interpreted, and presented sections of these books as exegetical evidence for the validity of FDG implementation.

Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā - evidence for female *dīkṣā-guru*

On page 25 of his book, the author claims that *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*, written by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, authorizes women to give initiations, which proves the validity of female *dīkṣā-gurus*.

In his commentary on this verse [from *Padma-purāṇa* on atonements] Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī notes: “The word ‘ca’ indicates another kind of atonement for the Vaiṣṇava. What is that atonement? One should again accept name and mantra from one’s own spiritual master (*punaḥ pañca-saṁskāra-pūrvvakam śrī-bhagavan-nāma-mantra-grahaṇam*). **If the guru is not present [left his body], one should accept them from the guru’s wife (*tad-abhāve tat-pātnyas*)**, if she is not present, then from his son, if he is not present, then from his Godbrother, and if he is not available, then from any other pure devotee (*sajatiyānanya-śaraṇa-sādhutaḥ*) having similar qualities. Thus becoming exceedingly pure by having accepted the *pañca-saṁskāras* again, he should offer obeisances to and worship Lord Viṣṇu, by fully engaging in hearing, chanting and remembering the name, form, qualities and pastimes of Lord Viṣṇu.” – [p 25]

Our refutations:

First: In the statement, “*punaḥ pañca-saṁskāra-pūrvvakam śrī-bhagavan-nāma-mantra-grahaṇam*,” of the *tika* (*Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*) of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, the word *punaḥ*, meaning

“again,” indicates that a fallen disciple must “again” approach his own spiritual master or in his absence, his representatives including his guru’s wife (only if the spiritual master is no longer living) to once again accept the *pañca-saṁskāra*. In other words, he gets “RE-INITIATED” and hence this does not apply to new or initiations for the first time as is the intent of GBC’s FDG resolution.

Second: The atonement given by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, applies only to those whose gurus are or were in good spiritual standing and practices. Only in cases wherein such a guru is no longer physically present to re-initiate the fallen disciple, does the guru’s wife, as his representative, perform the *pañca-saṁskāra* merely as a *ṛitvik* and not as a separate guru re-initiating the disciple.

Third: In this context, as a representative of her departed husband, the eligibility of the *guru-patni* (departed guru’s wife) to reinitiate his disciples is not a blanket sanction for all women to initiate and accept disciples.

Fourth: These verses are not to be misunderstood as applicable to first-time initiations since Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī states “atonement for Vaiṣṇavas” which indicates that the person must have already been awarded a *vaiṣṇava-dikṣā* by a bonafide male guru. Nor should one understand these verses as a primary recourse for getting a mantra from a female *dikṣā-guru* via the process of the *pañca-saṁskāra*. Here Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī cites the *Nārada Pāñcarātra Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* verses 3.22-25 as the scripture that describes how to perform the *pañca-saṁskāra* process, which the author neglected to mention.

Does Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī endorse FDG?

On page 25 of his book, the author further claims that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī authorized the implementation of female *dikṣā-gurus* as a standard process of the *pañca-saṁskāra* system:

In other words, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī not only recognizes a theoretical possibility of *Vaiṣṇavī-dikṣā-gurus* but actually enjoins

as a standard spiritual principle that one retake both the *nāma* and mantra via the process of *pañca-saṁskāra* from the departed guru's wife as the primary recourse.

Given the principle that qualified Vaiṣṇavis can give *pāñcarātrika-dīkṣā* into *nāma* and mantras — as established here by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī — one would expect to see authentic examples of this principle in the Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava-sampradāya in practice. – [page 25]

Our refutations:

First: As already mentioned *sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* derives the process for Gauḍīya-vaiṣṇava re-initiation through *pañca-saṁskāra* mentioned in *Nārada-Pāñcarātra's Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* verses 3.22-25.¹¹ This further prove that the *Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* is the bonafide scripture for performing all kinds of *pañca-saṁskāra* and therefore the verses 1.42–44 of this scripture prohibiting women from acting as *dīkṣā-gurus*, must be adhered to. Hence, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī is not advocating the wholesale implementation of FDG.

Second: Even accepting the author's claim that these verses are evidence that institutionalized FDG are bona fide, this would automatically render the prior FDGs of the *Gauḍīya-vaiṣṇava-sampradāyas*, such as Jāhnavā-devī, merely re-initiating gurus of fallen disciples of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and would further reduce all instances of female-gurus in the *Gauḍīya-sampradāya* to be mere re-initiating ṛitviks and not actual *dīkṣā-gurus*.

Obviously, unless the author accepts the *Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* as the bonafide scripture he cannot cite *sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* as an evidence for the validity of the FDG. However, in latter sections of his book, the author severely criticizes the *Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* as a scripture not suitable for ISKCON because it advocates bodily consciousness. This only proves that the author is engaging in half-hen logic of accepting *Nārada-Pāñcarātra's Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* verses 3.22-25 because they seem to favor

11 See sections titled, "Gauḍīya-ācāryas on the Bharadvāja-saṁhitā" for explanation of the actual verses.

FDG but reject verses 1.42–44 of the same scripture because they prohibit FDGs.

Divorcing Śrīla Prabhupāda and *śāstra*

In this section, we discuss another common argument of the proponents of FDG – that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words are *śāstra* and that there is no need to harmonize his statements with the words of *śāstras*. To a certain extent, this is a true statement, but pro-FDGs including the author misunderstand and misapply this principle. In pursuance of their strange ideas and zeal, they tend to quote selected statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda from his letters and informal conversations that apparently seem to support the pro-FDG position, and at the same time, they dismiss as irrelevant the purport to SB 4.12.32, in which Śrīla Prabhupāda categorically states that the idea of women *dikṣā-gurus* is not supported by *śāstric* injunctions. They also tend to adopt dangerous harmonization techniques¹² that are not based on *guru-sādhū-śāstra*. In the following passages, we present *śāstric* analysis and refutations based on *śāstra* to all their arguments on this subject.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words are equal to or greater than *śāstras*:

On page 19, of his book, “Guru: The principle not the body,” the author emphatically states that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words are equal to or greater than *śāstras*. During an online debate in a whatsapp conference,¹³ the author repeatedly expressed a paraphrased summary of the same views. On page 25 of his yet another article titled, “THE SUNĪTI PRAMĀṆA AND SET THEORY,” the author expresses essentially the same views, as cited below:

12 Contrary to their own claim that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words are *śāstra* and that there is no need to harmonize.

13 The public WhatsApp debate was organised by SABHA (GBC body) participated by Madana-mohana Dāsa, October 17–28, 2020, is archived at: <https://tinyurl.com/muxtckap>

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī in Tattva-sandarbhā, Sarva-saṁvādinī commentary on Text 9 states: tatra vaiduṣe ca vipratipattibhramādi-nṛ-doṣa-rāhityāt, śabdasyāpi tan-mūlatvāc ca. About the perceptions of the wise there is no disagreement because these perceptions are devoid of the human weaknesses, such as faulty judgment. Moreover, the perceptions of the wise are the basis of even verbal testimony [śabda-pramāṇa]. Based on this, Śrīla Prabhupāda's words are:

- 1a. Equal to or in some cases even greater than śāstrās
- 1b. Thence: no need to harmonize his statements with śāstrās.
- 1c. Thence: must be followed even if and when their instructions cannot be readily verified by śāstrās.¹⁴

Our refutations:

In the following paragraphs we will refute each of the above three statements of the author labeled 1a, 1b, and 1c respectively. Let us first consider the position of the author labeled 1a: “Śrīla Prabhupāda's words are: 1a. Equal to or in some cases even greater than śāstrās.”

First: Śrīla Prabhupāda, in no ambiguous terms, emphasized “*śāstra-yonitvāt*” or keeping the scriptures at the center and also instructed his disciples to study and follow whatever he stated in his books (he also often criticized his disciples for not reading them).

śāstra-yonitvāt [*Brahma-sūtra* 1.1.3]. The *Vedānta* says, “You have to understand God through *śāstra*.” By the scriptures you have to understand. *Śāstra-yonitvāt*. Everything is there. The *śāstra* gives you direction. Therefore human being is meant to study the *śāstras*. [Walk, May 1, 1973, Los Angeles]

From the above statement, we can understand that *śāstra* is the center of all. In the same manner, to understand Śrīla Prabhupāda's statements we have to thoroughly study his books and keep the instructions from his books at the center of discourse and understanding.

14 See page 15, “THE SUNĪTI PRAMĀṆA AND SET THEORY,” located at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9cz9n9>

Second: According to *Āpastamba Dharma-sūtra* (1.1.1.2,3): *dharmajña samayaḥ pramāṇam/vedāśca*: “The knowers of the law are authorities for us and the Vedas alone are their authority. The Vedas are therefore the root authority in matters of dharma and *adharma*.” This indicates that the actions of an *ācārya* are equivalent to *śāstra* when nothing is mentioned in *śāstra* about a particular topic and also when those actions in themselves are not in opposition to *śāstric* injunctions.

Third: If one accepts the author’s part “1a,” that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words as equal to or even greater than *śāstra*, then one should accept the SB 4.12.32 and SB 4.12.33 purports as they are. So according to the SB 4.12.32 purport, the statement that being a woman, one cannot become a *dikṣā-guru* should be accepted as it is. On what basis then ISKCON women claim to become *dikṣā-guru*? Accepting the purport to SB 4.12.33 “as it is,” means that even if a woman is an instructing spiritual master, she cannot be independent or execute austerities and penances like men do as initiating spiritual masters.

Fourth: The author, in his part “1a” says that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words are equal to or greater than *śāstra*, and that we should accept all statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda without any questioning or classifying of any form. However, he himself does not seem to follow this rule while writing his book. We find that in several sections of his book, he openly questions, interprets, and speculates about Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words. For example, he says that the statements in the SB 4.12.32 purport are descriptive and not prescriptive or that unlike Suniti, ISKCON women are not vengeful, etc.¹⁵ Does the author practice what he preaches?

Fifth: Accepting that Śrīla Prabhupāda is “*śāstra* personified” or “devotee *Bhāgavata*” and the revealed scriptures as “book

¹⁵ Responding to this question in the whatsapp debate, the author, Madana-mohana Dāsa, said: “They are women but, **they are not Suniti**, they don’t live 7 manvantaras ago, **they don’t have vengeance against their husbands and cowives as the main motive for instructing Dhruva...**”

śāstra” or “book *Bhāgavata*,”¹⁶ means that we must follow what Śrīla Prabhupāda says in his books as it is. Śrīla Prabhupāda as “śāstra personified” instructs us to keep the “book śāstra” at the center of all.¹⁷ Hence there is no confusion about when to follow “devotee *Bhāgavata*” (“śāstra personified”) or when to follow “book *Bhāgavata*” (“book śāstra”).

Harmonize Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words with śāstrās

We will continue with our refutations to the author’s stated position labeled, “1b. Thence: no need to harmonize his [Śrīla Prabhupāda’s] statements with śāstrās.”

Our refutations:

First: The question raised herein is: can we harmonize Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words with śāstrās? Śrīla Prabhupāda, Gauḍīya ācāryas, and Lord Caitanya always harmonized apparent conflicts amongst various statements of previous ācāryas with śāstra as the center. Hence, we are bound to follow the method of study that Śrīla Prabhupāda taught us through his personal example as it is. An example of which is from the purport to SB 6.19.13, wherein Śrīla Prabhupāda harmonizes the conflicting statements between Madhvācārya and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa in regards to the position of Lakṣmīdevī, by citing appropriate verses from *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* to arrive at the correct conclusion. Another example of harmonizing the statements of previous ācāryas with śāstrās can be found in SB 1.3.15, in regards to whether or not there is always a devastation after the change of every Manu.¹⁸

Moreover, like Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī, and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, Śrīla Prabhupāda also wrote his own commentary to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. However, all these commentaries were in harmony

16 The terms “devotee *Bhāgavata*” and “book *Bhāgavata*” are explained in the purport to SB 1.2.18

17 Cc *Madhya* 20.352 purport

18 <https://tinyurl.com/5n8evsfj>

works with Śrīdhara Svāmi's commentary and in harmony with *śāstras*. Similarly, as followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda, we may write purports to his purports but our purports shall be harmonized with Śrīla Prabhupāda's ("śāstra personified") purports. This is the reason why in his purport to Cc *Madhya* 20.352, Śrīla Prabhupāda, although a *śāstra* personified, mandates harmonization with "book *śāstra*" as the center of all. In short, harmonizing Śrīla Prabhupāda's words with *śāstrā* is not only the correct method but also is an imperative standard of our *paramparā*.

Second: In addition to his purport to Cc *Madhya* 20.352, that *śāstra-vākyas* must be the center of *guru-vākyas* and *sādhuvākyas*, there are numerous places wherein Śrīla Prabhupāda has emphasized the need to harmonize everything with *śāstrā*. In a lecture, Śrīla Prabhupāda states that although Lord Caitanya is God and can make *śāstra*, still playing the role of an *ācārya* He immediately gives Vedic evidence for everything He says.¹⁹ Hence, the opinion of the author that Śrīla Prabhupāda's words should not be harmonized with *śāstrā* is not rooted in Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings on the role of an *ācārya* and the genuine system of understanding.

Third: However, when a need arises to harmonize or interpret the words of Śrīla Prabhupāda the method for harmonization shall follow proper rules of exegesis as given by our predecessor *ācāryas* and in accordance with *guru-sādhuvākyas*.

Fourth: Harmonizing our Founder-Ācārya's statements with *śāstra-vākyas* is not an unprecedented *vaiṣṇava-sampradāya* practice. In the *Śrī-vaiṣṇava-sampradāya*, there are instances in which Śrīpāda Rāmānujacārya's words contained in *Śrī-Bhāṣya* that could not be verified with *sānskrit-vedas* were harmonized with *Divya-prabhandham*²⁰ verses by their *sampradaya-ācāryas*.

19 Lecture SB 1.2.11, Oct 22, 1972, Vrindavan

20 "Dramīdopaniṣad-prabhāva-sarvasvam," Śrī Kāñcī P.B.A Svāmi (ch13, p 37,38), Chennai Rathinam Press, 1954. *Divya-prabhandham* is *tamil-vedas*.

Fifth: We agree that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statements as equivalent to *śabda-pramaṇa*. It follows then that as per his instruction in his purport to Cc *Madhya* 20.352 one has to keep *śāstra* at the actual center of all. Therefore, isn’t that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statement – “According to *śāstric* injunctions, ... Sunīti, however, being a woman, and specifically his mother, could not become Dhruva Mahārāja’s *dīkṣā-guru*,” – contained in the SB 4.12.32 purport mandates us to find the corresponding *śāstric* injunctions. Verses 1.42–44 of the *Nārada-Pāñcarātra Bharadvāja-saṁhitā*, are indeed those *śāstric* injunctions.

Śrīla Prabhupāda – to be followed and not imitated

Let us continue with our refutations to the author’s stated position labeled, “1c. Thence: must be followed even if and when their instructions cannot be readily verified by *śāstrās*.”

Our refutations:

First: Certainly, there may be situations wherein Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words and/or actions are not readily verifiable by *śāstra*. Nonetheless, these are the exceptions and not the norm because Śrīla Prabhupāda, following the footsteps of Lord Caitanya and His followers, always spoke and acted according to scriptural injunctions. SB 10.33.31 emphatically establishes the formula for intelligent followers to distinguish between following and imitating activities of the great personalities.²¹ In that verse, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, a “*śāstra* personified,” specifically explains that words that are consistent with the actions of a great personality alone can become the actionable example for intelligent followers.

Second: Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statement that women can be *dīkṣā-gurus* but “not so many” is *satyam* (truth) in the same way as his statement that being a woman, Sunīti could not become

21 *īśvarāṇām vacaḥ satyam tathaivācaritaṁ kvacit teṣāṁ yat sva-vaco-yuktaṁ buddhimāns tat samācaret*

“The statements of the Lord’s empowered servants are always true, and the acts they perform are exemplary when consistent with those statements. Therefore one who is intelligent should carry out their instructions.”

Dhruva Mahārāja's *dikṣā-guru* is the truth. Based on SB 10.33.31, Śrīla Prabhupāda's spoken words (in his correspondences, lectures, and conversations) that women can become a *dikṣā-gurus* is not an actionable example for ISKCON since Śrīla Prabhupāda never appointed a woman as a temple president, or a GBC, or a *ṛtvik* on his behalf not to mention *dikṣā-gurus*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's spoken words vs. his books and writings:

The common understanding of the pro-FDG camp is that Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings contained in his books are "descriptive" (do not demand an action) whereas his words contained in his correspondence and private conversations are "prescriptive" and demand actions. Going through the book in question, it is clear from page 175 that this author also subscribes to this viewpoint, as cited below:

Therefore this quote cannot be used as a normative statement — simply because it is unclear what exactly, if anything, it is supposed to normalize. Therefore the Sunīti quote is descriptive (simply stating the fact of her being unable to initiate Dhruva), not prescriptive (mandating a certain course of action) or proscriptive (forbidding other women to initiate).²²

Our refutations and comments:

First: All along the author argued that Śrīla Prabhupāda's words are equal to or greater than *śāstrā* and that there is no need to harmonize his statements with *śāstrā*. Nonetheless, he conveniently classifies the SB 4.12.32 purport as descriptive and not prescriptive. Is the author not acting in contradiction to his own principles? Are those principles only for others to follow and not applicable to the author himself? In any case, this only confirms our conclusions established in previous sections that the author is not well established in philosophy but is affected by mere emotions and sentiments.

²² <https://tinyurl.com/36bxswjc> [page 174]

Second: Where in the gamut of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings that we find him use the classification of prescriptive vs. descriptive, especially when explaining the teachings of his guru or *guru-paramaparā ācāryas*?²³

Third: Is the method of determining “descriptive” or “prescriptive” based on *pratyakṣa* (direct perception) or *anumāna* (logical indications) or *śabda* (verbal testimonies) or *aitihya* (tradition)?

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words vs. Underdetermination

On page 174, under the heading “Underdetermination”, the author goes on to vouch for some “prominent ISKCON scholar’s” analysis on SB 4.12.32 purport and adds his narrative at the end, all aimed at dismissing Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statements made in this purport as “Underdetermination” at best, as shown below:

The SB 4.12.32 purport is “descriptive” and hence not an instruction that demands any action. “The point about the Suniti quote is that it is ambiguous. It is a classic problem in philosophy, especially philosophy of science. It is called underdetermination. This means the evidence (the quote in this case) is consistent with several theories (explanations). It is consistent with multiple ideas, such as:

1. no woman should ever give initiation to any man or woman;
2. a woman should only give initiation to another woman but not to man;
3. under the *vaidika* system, a woman could not take initiation and therefore could not give it;

²³ On page 117, the author misquotes Jīva Gosvāmī’s commentary to SB 10.53 on Mother Rukmini taking Ambika-mantra from wives of *Brāhmaṇas*, is a clear example of going away and outside of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s commentary presented in Kṛṣṇa book chapter 53. Equating the standards of an “*Ambika-dīkṣā* mantra” with that of “*Kṛṣṇa-dīkṣā* mantra,” goes against Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings, all of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava teachings and broader Vaiṣṇava sect teachings causing *nāma-aparādha*! Reference: <https://tinyurl.com/yan2zjzm>

4. Sunīti was initiated under *Pāñcarātri* systems but was either not allowed to initiate others by the particular *Pāñcarātri* rules for her *manvantara*, or could but not her son;
5. Sunīti as Dhruva's mother and a neglected co-wife of the King was afflicted by grief out of affection for her son, as well as by jealousy and vengefulness towards Suruci and Uttānapāda, and therefore she could not muster enough composure and clarity (required of a guru) to pacify and enlighten even herself, much less her son;
6. her motherly attachment to Dhruva and/or her insufficient spiritual level by itself disqualified her from being anything more than *patha-pradarśaka-guru* for him, which is the least involved and responsible type of *śikṣā-guru*, and one that rarely develops into a permanent and substantial *śikṣā* relationship, which is a mandatory precursor for *dikṣā*;

Our refutations:

First: The above six ideas offered as different possible explanations for what Śrīla Prabhupāda meant in his purport to SB 4.12.32, “Sunīti, however, being a woman, and specifically his mother, could not become Dhruva Mahārāja's *dikṣā-guru*,” are unnecessary, irrelevant, and simply speculative. The fact is that this statement cannot be interpreted outside of its context. As per basic English grammar, the use of the word “however,” obviously indicates a continuation of context from previous statements. In the previous sentences, Śrīla Prabhupāda speaks the words “according to *śāstric* injunctions,” as the main context of the following sentences. Hence, the connecting word, “however, being a woman...” mandates the readers to consider it in conjunction with the previous sentence “accordance to *śāstric* injunctions.” Therefore, the author and his camp should reconsider their statements made in points (1.) and (2.) above, in harmony and accordance with *śāstric* injunctions. If they harmonize with the *Nārada-pāñcarātra Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* (1.42) they would find that scriptures forbid women from giving *dikṣā* to both men and women.

Second: A study of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in its natural sequence along with Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purports (SB 4.8.52) and Sanātana Gosvāmī’s *Digdarśini-ṭīkā* to *Hari Bhakti Vilāsa*, informs us that the *dvādaśākṣara* (12 syllable) mantra that Dhruva Mahārāja received from Nārada Muni was from the *pāñcarātra* system.²⁴ Hence the point (3.) of the author’s camp referring to *vaidika* system is irrelevant to SB 4.12.32 purport. The *Nārada-pāñcarātra Bharadvāja-saṁhitā* (1.42 – 44) prohibits a woman from giving *pāñcarātra* mantras to any of her relatives including her son, in all *manvantaras*. Hence points (4.) of the author’s camp is purely a speculation.

Third: The viewpoints of the author’s camp made in points (5.) and (6.) could not be located anywhere in chapters of the SB (texts and purports) that describe Dhruva Mahārāja’s life history and hence they are wild speculations not representing the mood of Śrīla Prabhupāda and our previous *ācāryas*. On one hand the author revolts against others providing any sort of harmonization of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words with *śāstra* or the words of previous *ācāryas*, but in this section, he along with his pro-FDG camp indulges heavily in proving disharmony between Śrīla Prabhupāda’s views and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhakura’s views. Śrīla Prabhupāda termed Sunīti as a “farseeing woman,” taught her son “the standard way of God realization,” exemplary mother in instructing her son towards spiritual perfection, and extremely chaste wife (*pati-devatāyāh*).²⁵ Whereas the author’s camp find her character to be jealousy, vengeful, sloppy in her spiritual practices, and unqualified to have a *śikṣā* relationship with her son, not to mention her becoming her son’s *dikṣā-guru*.

Fourth: Hence, in light of the above-mentioned refutations based on the *Nārada-pāñcarātra Bharadvāja-saṁhitā*, out of the six points made by the author’s camp, point (1.) is the only

24 Refer purport to SB 4.8.52 and Dt-HBV 125-127 to SB 4.8.54 (*tatra śrī-vaiṣṇava-tantrēṣu madhye...*).

25 Ref: SB 4.8.23, SB 4.9.41, SB 4.12.33, 34, and 41 purports

viable explanation and the remaining ideas (2- 6) can be safely discarded as irrelevant and un-necessary speculations. Point (1.) is valid because it is confirmed by *śāstra* and Śrīla Prabhupāda that women in general are forbidden from giving *dikṣā* to anyone. In this way it has been proved that the SB 4.12.32 purport is clearly communicating that women in general cannot act as *dikṣā-gurus* and therefore it is not an “Underdetermination.”

Insulting Vedic culture and Vaiṣṇavas

In the previous section, we exposed the fallacy on the part of the author of the book under discussion, who deemed SB 4.12.32 purport as “underdetermination,” or in other words ambiguous. In this section, we will excavate from the history of the author’s own words some hard truths exposing his offensive attitudes – committing severe offenses, *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*, by deriding great adherents of Vedic culture like queen Sunīti. The key point is that the author’s stubbornness in labeling Śrīla Prabhupāda’s SB 4.12.32 purport, a direct statement against the implementation of FDG, as underdetermination knows no bounds. In desperation, the author resorts to deriding and insulting Vedic culture and Vedic personalities.

During the online debate on the WhatsApp conference, despite devotees raising objections to such deprecation and insulting of Sunīti, whom Śrīla Prabhupāda has glorified as an exalted devotee, exemplary mother, most chaste wife, and *śikṣa-guru* of Dhruva Mahārāja, the author has refused to apologize and instead only intensified his attack, feeding fuel to the fire of offensive outlook of Vedic culture and Vedic personalities.

Was Sunīti jealous, vengeful, and an unqualified mother?

It is worth repeating that in points 5 and 6, presented under the heading “Underdetermination” on page 174 of his book, the author not only sides with the offenders against the Lord’s pure devotee, Sunīti, but also himself proudly expanded upon their offensive statements in the Appendix 2 section of his

book. An example of this is the author twisting the meaning of the statement, “Sunīti, however, being a woman, ... Dhruva Mahārāja’s *dīkṣā-guru*,” in his attempt to establish that this does not apply to ISKCON women devotees because:

10/21/20, 21:39-Madan Mohan Das: They are women, but, they are not Suniti, they don’t live 7 manvantaras ago, they don’t have vengeance against their husbands and cowives as the main motive for instructing Dhruva, and, most importantly, unlike Suniti, they did receive Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instruction to become gurus —siksa or even diksa. So their gender is the least consideration.²⁶

It is not that the author’s comments were unintentional because we find on page 211 of his book, at the beginning of the Appendix-2, he emphatically expresses his adamant conviction on this most serious topic, as cited below:

Section IV titled The Sunīti Pramāṇa lists the following as one possible explanation as to why Sunīti could not become Dhruva’s *dīkṣā-guru*:

Sunīti as Dhruva’s mother and a neglected co-wife of the King was afflicted by grief out of affection for her son, as well as by jealousy and vengefulness towards Suruci and Uttānapāda, and therefore she could not muster enough composure and clarity (required of a guru) to pacify and enlighten even herself, much less her son;

This statement caused pushback from some readers who even asked for a public apology. However, there are valid scriptural and logical reasons for this hypothesis that add to the problem of underdetermination of the Sunīti quote.

Here is the story line, verse-wise:

The following sections will establish beyond doubt that the author had the purposeful intent of insulting pure devotees such

²⁶ Author made this statement on the WhatsApp conference. Readers may search, verbatim, the document located at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p968vb3>

as Sunīti, despite words of cautions from several readers not to commit the mad-elephant offense of *vaiṣṇava-nindā*.

Misrepresentation of Sunīti and Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words

In a previous section, we have shown examples of the author twisting and mangling the context flow of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purports to establish his agenda of deriding Sunīti’s character as being despicable and hence her being inferior to the average female devotees in ISKCON. As the author stated, “Here is the story line, versewise:” on page 211 of his book, he indeed created a story of his own by jumbling Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statements according to his whims.²⁷ We will now proceed to show further proof of the author’s misrepresentation of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statements in the following paragraphs of this section.

In the purport to SB 4.12.34 Śrīla Prabhupāda glorifies the character and actions of Sunīti (emphasis ours):

It should be noted also that while Sunīti was going to Vaikuṇṭhaloka she also changed her body into a spiritual form. **Like Śrī Sunīti, every mother should train her child to become a devotee like Dhruva Mahārāja.** Sunīti instructed her son, even at the age of five years, to be unattached to worldly affairs and to go to the forest to search out the Supreme Lord. She never desired that her son remain at home comfortably without ever undertaking austerities and penances to achieve the favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. **Every mother, like Sunīti, must take care of her son and train him to become a brahmācārī from the age of five years and to undergo austerities and penances for spiritual realization.** The benefit will be that if her son becomes a strong devotee like Dhruva, certainly not only will he be transferred back home, back to Godhead but she will also be transferred with him to the spiritual world, even though she may be unable to undergo austerities and penances in executing devotional service. [SB 4.12.34 purport]

The above purport excerpt with added emphasis highlights the opinion of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya ISKCON,

²⁷ See also: “Grain of rice test” section for full analysis.

about Śrīmatī Sunīti. Śrīla Prabhupāda concludes that despite Sunīti’s deficiencies, whatever that may have been, she serves as a role model for every mother to raise their sons to become pure devotees, and by no means does he intend to exclude ISKCON’s mothers or female devotees. In another purport Śrīla Prabhupāda glorifies Sunīti’s character as being greatly compassionate towards Suruci, and her son, Uttama, as shown below (emphasis ours):

But still, when the news reached the palace that Dhruva Mahārāja was returning, his mother, **Sunīti, out of her great compassion** and due to being the mother of a great Vaiṣṇava, **did not hesitate to take the other wife, Suruci, and her son, Uttama, on the same palanquin. That was the greatness of Queen Sunīti,** the mother of the great Vaiṣṇava Dhruva Mahārāja. – [SB 4.9.41 purport]

Let us compare the statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda with the statements made by the author in Appendix-2, pages 211 and 212 of his book, wherein he emphatically declares that “by all means” Sunīti was NOT a role model for ISKCON mothers or female devotees to adopt and follow:

4.8.20: However, when, according to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Dhruva calls Suruci sinful (pāpīyasyā), being apprehensive to take birth in her womb as a result of his worship, Sunīti, having just counseled him on forgiveness, respect to Suruci and the need of a cheerful attitude, instead of countering his remark, plays along with his anger by calling Suruci vile. Moreover, unprompted, she also called Uttānapāda henpecked, vile and foolish. [One of the readers suggested that she was telling Dhruva the truth. However, is this type of veracity allowed for or expected of an ideal Vedic wife — calling her husband behind his back foolish, vile and henpecked — in a conversation with their son who is visibly out to get back at them? Does calling them such ill names help Dhruva follow what she has just advised him to do — forgive, forget, respect and be happy — or it rather stokes his anger?

Not only that but SB states that:

- SB 6.18.34 (Kasyapa to Diti): ...
- SB 7.11.25 (Nārada to Yudhisthira): ...
- SB 10.29.24-25 (Lord Kṛṣṇa to gopis): ...

I will leave it to others to judge if calling the husband vile, henpecked and foolish to one's underage son visibly mad at him is actually compatible with seeing him as a representative of the Lord and a supreme demigod, as well as an object of worship, service, and unwavering sweet disposition — even if he is actually obnoxious and foolish. Also, Suruci is definitely a relative of her husband and, as such, per Nārada and Lord Kṛṣṇa above, also must be treated with an equally sweet disposition and good behavior. Finally, calling a co-wife and husband ill names in front of a minor son of yours, even if justified, hardly constitutes “taking good care” of him per SB 10.29.24-25.

So, while saying that she was vengeful might be a bit of an overstatement or not, this doesn't change the fact that her calling her husband and co-wife in front of Dhruva ill names is off limits for a Vedic wife, per above quotes.] – pages 211 – 212

As we can see from the above-cited statements, the author's opinions about Sunīti's character, her position as a role model for other mothers, and her great compassion for Suruci are in anti-thesis to that of Śrīla Prabhupāda's statements from his purport to SB 4.12.34 and SB 4.9.41. Moreover, the author's blasphemy of Sunīti's character and his statements which directly contradict Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport raises some serious questions about his hatred for Vedic culture, Vedic personalities, and credibility of his research.

As indicated before, by citing Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary the author wrongly purported that Sunīti's character was vengeful. Though he admitted to having misrepresented the Ṭhākura's statements, he is still guilty of

creating a conflict between Śrīla Prabhupāda's opinion and our previous *ācārya*'s opinions regarding Sunīti's character and position. Instead of reconciling the apparent conflicting opinions between our *ācāryas*, the author out of sheer hatred for Vedic culture and Vedic personalities chose to speculate on a mental platform thereby only confusing the devotees.

The author is also guilty of violating his statements of loyalty to Śrīla Prabhupāda's words being as good as or greater than *śāstra*, not requiring harmonization with *śāstra*, and as good as the statements of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Based on the evidence provided herein exposing the author's unjustifiable and unwarranted twisting of the statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda, his diligence to adhere his own principle is certainly questionable. The readers may recollect the author's statement – "thence there is no need to harmonize Śrīla Prabhupāda's words against *śāstra*" – and relate it to the author's well-engineered lexical sleight of the hand. What else does such a demonstration of unethical scholarship reveal other than a vicious plan of the author to keep ISKCON devotees in ignorance regarding the actual scriptural injunctions against the implementation of FDG?

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *dikṣā* lineage controversy

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is the *Gauḍīya-sampradāya pravartaka* or the one who re-established the authentic *Gauḍīya* philosophy and practices. This includes discovering the actual place of appearance of Lord Caitanya. The widespread prevalence of numerous controversies and misappropriations of *Gauḍīya-siddhata* is an irrefutable fact. Notwithstanding that, there are several misconceptions that are prevailing even today in devotee circles of the *Gauḍīya-sampradāya* regarding understanding the exact position of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Śrīla Ṭhākura's *dikṣā* lineage has been a hugely controversial

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